## THE EDMONTON - PRINCE GEORGEPEACE RIVER TRIANGLE BY F. H. KITTO

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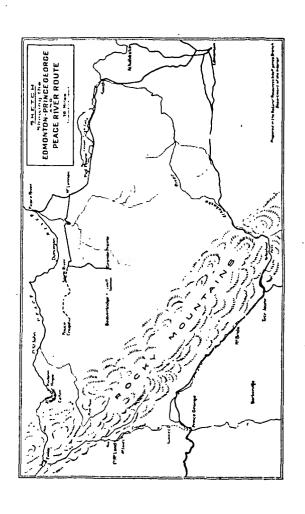
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## THE EDMONTON PRINCE GEORGE PEACE RIVER TRIANGLE

An Outing Trip of Exceptional
Beauty Through Majestic
Wonders of Canadian
Rockies

By F. H. KITTO

RECORD PRINTING COMPANY LIMITE Peace River, Alberta



## The

## Edmonton - Prince George -Peace River Triangle

Gorgeous Beauties of Mountains, Lakes, Rivers and Valleys - Where Nature is Wild - Where Fish and Game Abound - An Outing Trip Ideal By Rail and Canoe

A descriptive report by Mr. F. H. Kitto.

Canadians have a slogan, perfectly legitimate but inadequately emphasized, "See Canada First," A mistaken impression has been allowed to prevail that in order to see the best of nature's handiwork or in order
to enjoy to the utmost a holiday outing, one must go
abroad. This misapprehension has resulted in the undertaking by many of the wealthy classes of extensive and
expensive foreign excursions and of the denial to other
classes of longed-for outings which appeared beyond
their means. On the one hand money has been
spent abroad which might better have been spent at
home and on the other hand pleasures have been curtailed needlessly.

Canadians dream of the majestic wonders of the Swiss Alps, the mystic charm of the fiords of Norway or the lure of famous foreign lake districts, entirely overlooking the fact that our own Canadian Rockies, our irregular Pacific coast or enchanting lake districts found in any of our provinces rival in magnitude or beauty

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such better known competitors. Within reach of almost any Canadian city or town there are wonders of Nature that when visited by world-wide tourists bring forth out-bursts of surprise and admiration but of which we know scarcely anything. It is to be hoped that the slogan "See Canada First" will be acted upon to the fullest extent in order that every citizen of the Dominion will realize the home advantages and that the country itself may benefit financialy through an increased local holiday traffic.

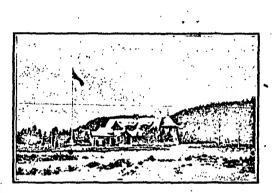
Itineraries without number might be enumerated embracing all phases of outings from a quiet day's fishing with punt or canoe to a most elaborate and extensive tour covering months in the wilds. As an example of a modest ten days' or two weeks' outline, especially appealing to the traveller or business man, might be mentioned the Edmonton-Prince George-Peace River Triangle.

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Taking Edmonton as a starting point (though Prince George might equally well be chosen) the outing would include a day's journey by train to Prince George, then branching into the main part of the outing, a canoe trip from the head waters of the Peace river through the Rocky mountains and down this famous waterway as far as the town of Peace River, from where the return to Edmonton would embrace another day's travel by init.

Presuming a party of four men undertake this trip their equipment could be limited to an 18-foot cruiser cance, a couple of small silk tents or one larger one, a very limited supply of provisions, camp utensils and the necessary rolls of beddings and personal kit bags. Cameras and fishing tackle should be included by all means, but unless the trip is especially arranged as a hunting one firearms should be discarded. The maximum of enjoyment with the minimum of hardship could be secured by choosing the month of August as the time for this outing.

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SUPERINTENDENT'S RESIDENCE, JASPER PARK, ALBERTA



MOUNT ROBSON, LOOKING EAST FROM THE CANADIAN NATIONAL RAILWAY

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With camp outfit consigned to the baggage car the party will leave Edmonton at midnight by the Grand Trunk Pacific Railway. The journey from Edmonton to Prince George comprising some 486 miles is of more than usual interest. The roadbed has been built to the highest standard and the trains operating on it are of the most modern type.

During the night and early hours of the morning the rich farming sections of Spruce Grove and Stony Plain are left behind; the north shore of Wabamun lake, Edmonton's summer resort, is skirted; the Pembina river crossed; Chip lake passed by; the winding McLeod river with its beautiful valleys of wild hav and peavine and its banks of heavy spruce is crossed and followed for some distance; and finally, about the time the sleepers are astir, the railway has entered the valley of the Athabasca, here step and narrow. The foothills fast give way to the mountains themselves. breakfast time the train has entered Jasper Park and Brule lake is one of the first scenes to attract all travellers to the windows or the observation platform on the rear car. A short stop is made at Jasper station, The residence of the park superintendent, with the Canadian ensign floating over it, surrounded by a group of cottages and tents and flanked by towering mountains, proclaims this a holiday resort. Visitors are continually arriving here and Jasper park promises to become a world-famous resort in a few years.

Proceeding on its journey the train then winds its way through the narrow gorge-like valley of the mountain streams forming the head waters of the Athabasca and culminating in the famous Yellowhead Pass. The elevation of the tracks here is only 3,716 feet above sea level, those of the Canadian Pacific railway at Kicking Horse Pass being 1,616 feet higher. The Canadian National railway paralleled the Grand Trunk Pacific through the Yellowhead but by an arrangement made during the

progress of the war both railways make common use of one set of rails for many miles through the mountain section.

The summit of the Rocky Mountains marks the boundary line between the provinces of Alberta and British Columbia and immediately beyond the Pass the travellers find themselves in the latter province. Extensive railway yards are located at Lucerne, practically on the divide. Mount Robson park adjoining Jasper Park on the British Columbia side of the line is then traversed. The traverse is beyond description, the crystal mountain lakes Lucerne, Rainbow and Resplendent with foaming mountain streams below and snow-capped peaks above culminating in the magnificent Mount Robson, the highest peak in the Canadian Rockies, with an elevation of 13,068 feet.

From the Yellowhead Pass to Prince George the route of the Grand Trunk Pacific follows the South Fork of the Fraser river. The first few miles of this river are mountain torrents but at Tete Jaune its proportions admit of steamboat navigation. During the construction of the railway at this point was the head of river navigation. Here the Canadian National railway swings to the south and disappears from view. The valley of the Fraser is heavily wooded and sawmills are in evidence with a few small clearings. The railway follows the river very closely excepting for a short distance between Hansard and Willow river where it cuts across a wide flat, while the river circles around under the foot of its right bank.

Prince George, the new Pacific town, built up adjoining the site of the old historical Fort George and at the confluence of the Nechako river, is reached about six o'clock in the afternoon. Good hotel accommodation is found here. South Fort George, where the government land offices are located, lies about a mile and a half south. The evening admits of completing arrangements

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for the came stage of the outing and of visiting the important points of interest here.

Before launching the cance in the headwaters of the Peace it is necessary to cross the Arctic-Pacific divide. This was formerly accomplished by way of Giscome Portage, a road some eight miles in length leading from a point on the Fraser river some forty-two miles above Prince George, to Summit lake. The ascent of the Fraser is no mean task and after the construction of the railway it became a favorite practice to take train to Hansard, the point where the railway crosses the river above the big bend, and then float down stream to the south of the portage. Now, however, better time can be made by having one's outfit freighted from Prince George to Summit lake over a road recently completed. This, with a light load, is easily accomplished in one day.

The Nechako is crossed on a wooden bridge opposite old Fort George. The valley of McMillan creek is then ascended leading to an extensive plateau. Salmon river. with a deep wooded valley, is next crossed after which the ground rises to a rough gravelly ridge. Numbers of settlers are scattered along on choice locations in these Summit lake is surrounded by high, rocky, wooded banks and contains a number of wooded islands. the north-westerly shore "Teapot Mountain," a peculiarly shaped hill, stands out as a landmark of unusual distinctiveness. On the shores of this charming little lake the first camp is pitched and exacting is he who demands a more promising start. A little trading post is located here where one may happily obtain some vital supply that perchance in the hurry and excitement or packing up has been overlooked. Aside from this the wilderness is unbroken.

Now the preliminaries are over and the party are ready for the real outing. The way is all down stream and some 500 miles of unparalleled canoeing lie ahead of them before they take train at Peace River town for.

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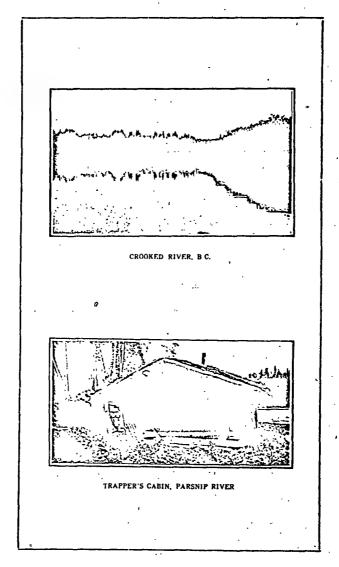
home. The way leads through the great silent vastness of the primeval wilderness; the haunts of the lonely trapper are penetrated; the hopes of the undaunted prospector are seen; the awe of the mighty Rockies is felt as the tiny canoe floats beneath the towering heights of Mount Selwyn; the vastness of the agricultural areas are realized on the last stage of the route and a faint idea, at best, of the wonderfulness of it all will surely be gained.

Summit lake is quickly crossed, but a good pilot is he who does not strike forthwith into the deep bay at hisright, looking for the outlet, instead of holding to the left of a wooded island and steering well for the fool of the "Teapot." A mass of water lillies almost chokes the outlet but the way leads right through them.

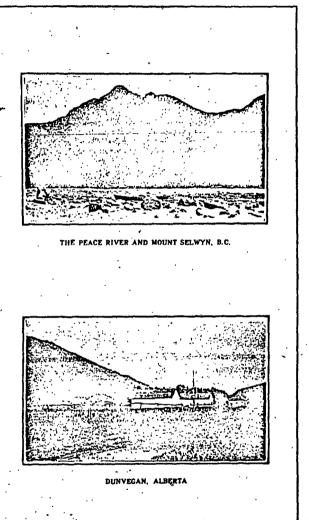
And now comes a rare bit of travelling down the well named Crooked river, for crooked it is beyond description. It winds and twists and turns in a most fantastic manner. Now you see the "Teapot" on your right, now on your left. First you are leaving it, then you are facing it, till finally it is lost altogether from view. In places the water is quite deep but on the other hand there are many shallow "riffles"—they can hardly be called rapids—where late in the season a canoe may require considerable coaxing to scrape along.

The striking feature of the river, however, is the clearness of the water and the great numbers of fish visible. They scurry ahead in schools like flocks of sheep, barely keeping clear of the paddle blades and dodging to the rear at every opportunity. Perhaps the majority consist of whitefish and suckers but trout or shad are everywhere plentiful. The beautiful "Dolly Varden" and "Rainbow" species take either troll or fly and on this section of the route the angler finds his paradise.

Flats, in places heavily wooded, but on the whole more lightly covered with brush and prolific growths of wild



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'hay, extend for some width to bordering hills of fir and spruce. Fringes of wiflow line both banks of the river nearly all the way. A couple of expansions, namely Davies and Kerry lakes, afford a opportunity for using the sail, should one be so fortunate as to have a fair wind.

McLeod lake is considerably larger and at the foot of it is located the Hudson's Bay Company's post, Fort McLeod, founded in 1805. At this historic post the party have an opportunity of witnessing the time-honored custom of fur-trading at a point not yet despoiled by the advances of civilization. A little apart from the Company's buildings stands a dilapidated Indian village, while opposite the landing an "old-timer" has a very fine vegetable garden.

Leaving Fort McLeod one takes the Pack river which drains McLeod lake into Parsnip river. There is one small lake expansion on the Pack, and one rapid which is not difficult to run is the cance is kept in a channel which has been cleared of boulders.

A marked contrast is most noticeable between the waters of the Parsnip and those prevailing before this river is reached. The Parsnip is a wide commanding river, with long sweeps of broad valley flanked by ever higher hills and its waters are cold, opaque and swift flowing. The canoe seems to shrink to diminutive proportions on its majestic waters.

This is the home of the trapper. As the canoe glides swiftly along his lonely cabin may be seen here and there almost hidden among the tall trees and thick underbrush at the mouths of the various tributary streams, the narrow valleys of which are his fields of operation. At this time of the year most of these cabins will be found vacant, the trappers now being engaged elsewhere on other duties as their trapping season extends only during the cold weather. But perchance one will be found "at

home" and if so he will be delighted to entertain the party over night.

By the snow-capped mountains coming into view to the right, to the left, and straight ahead it will be known that Findlay Forks are drawing near. Here the Parsnip, flowing from the south-east, meets the Finlay almost head on, and these two great rivers of the Rocky mountain intermontane valley unite their waters, and turning eastward flow as the famous Peace river through a gorge of the Rockies into the great plains of Northern Alberta.

Leaving Finlay Forks, the nucleus of a coming town now consisting merely of a small post, the fire rangers quarters and a few scattered cabins, the Finlay rapids must immediately be taken into consideration. It is quite possible to run these on the right limit, or more safely at certain stages of the water on the left, but it is advisable for a party unacquainted with them to play safe by taking a short portage on the left or north bank. Some 12 miles or so brings the into the heart of the Rockies. To the right Mount Selwyn towers above the river while on the left the valley of Wicked river cleaves the perpendicular cliffs of rocks massed to almost equal heights.

By all means a stop should be made here. On the little flat at the mouth of Wicked river a clearing has been made and a cabin erected by some mortal with an inborn love of the wild and rugged in nature. A foot trail leads some four miles up the trench-like valley of the Wicked. closely following this typical and turbulent mountain stream to a most picturesque canyon. Here the waters boil and roar as they rush through many whirlpools, under a natural rock bridge and over three cataracts. This is a bit of real scenery that should not be passed by.

The Peace leads on in great curves revealing fresh

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wonders and beauties and one can scarcely keep his paddle busy but idly lets the canoe drift as he gazes in rapture at the overhanging wonders. Another good camping place is found at the mouth of Barnard river. Below this a number of small creeks enter and finally the Ne Parle Pas rapids are encountered. By walking along the water's edge on the north shore and steadying the canoe they are passable without risk. A short distance below them the Ottertail river comes in from the north and at the mouth of its valley a little agricultural land is found. Such small areas are found in increasing extent all the way from here down. Carbon, river, which enters from the south below the Ottertail is worthy of a visit. On its upper parts are found outcrops of coal areas that are believed to be exceedingly extensive.

Below the Carbon are found some good bench lands and islands and on one flat placer miners will be found at work washing for gold.

The canyon marks the breaking of the Peace from the mountains and foothills to the great agricultural plains. It is the shape of a horseshoe some 20 miles in length and unnavigable. It will be remembered that Alexander Mackenzie on his famous exploration expedition to the Pacific coast in 1793, attempted to ascend it but was forced to abandon the attempt and portage his canoe to its head. Later a trading post "Rocky Mountain House" was established at the head but this has disappeared.

A couple of small cabins and usually some discarded boats make the landing. Caution should be exercised that the canoe does not slip by unawares. It is believed the Public Works Department at Ottawa intend erecting a large warning sign at this point and it is certainly needed.

A 14-mile wagon road leads across the heel of the horseshee from the head of the canyon to Hudson's Hope at the foot. Upon arrangement canoe and supplies will

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be freighted across by settlers living at the lower end. The road is in fair shape and a walk across it is an excellent exercise after the cramped quarters of a canoe. Arriving at Hudson's Hope one feels himself entering into a different country. It is a land of farming and ranching, the outpost of the famous Peace River district.

One may get in touch with the outside world again by telegraph, the Edmonton-Peace River wire ending here. If tired of canoeing, passage on a modern river steamboat may be taken down river but, as the current is with one and a wait of a few days for a steamer may be necessry, it is good policy to continue. The Peace now flows through a valley some 800 feet below the level of the surrounding country, so that but little of the actual farming can be seen from the canoe. However, some excellent farms are found on flats in the river bends and side trips to the top are always in order. A few miles below Hudson's Hope are "The Gates" the last appearance of anything approaching the rocky walls of the mountain section,

Fort St. John is worthy of a day's visit and a climb should be made to the top of the north bank where beautiful level farm lands of the richest and best are to be seen. About 30 miles below Fort St. John there is a steamboat landing on the south side of the river, near the Alberta-British Columbia boundary, from where a trail leads south to Pouce Coupe, the centre of another choice section of farming and ranching lands.

An illuminating side trip could be made by taking this trail, arranging transportation by wire from Fort St. John, and following it southerly to the Red Willow and Beaverlodge areas, thence swinging easterly by Laka Saskatoon to Grande Prairie. Rail or motor can then be taken north to Spirit River from where a road of about 15 miles leads down to meet the river at Dunvegan.

The outing could be broken up and made exceptionally interesting by two of the party taking this side trip while the others followed down the river with the canos. At Dunvegan places might be exchanged, those who had gone overland taking the canos on down to Peace River while the others take a car over the trail from Dunvegan, some 65 miles in length, which after climbing to the high plateau to the north leads through such choice sections as Waterhole, Bluesky, Bear Lake and others to meet the river again at Peace River. In this way the party, collectively, would see the great Peace River agricultural lands so rapidly being settled up. If the weather was favorable and harvest operatons chanced to be under way it would be an arrangement well worth while and of more than ordinary enlightment.

The town of Peace River is an interesting frontler metropolis. It is the headquarters of steamboat navigation which extends upstream to Hudson's Hope and downstream to Fort Vermilion and Vermilion Chutes. One of the sights is the million dollar railway bridge recently completed by the Edmonton, Dunvegan & British Columbia railway company.

Here the cance and camp outfit may be packed away and the kit bag discarded for the suitcase and travelling bag, which if expressed here on leaving Prince George will enable the party to discard their field clothes for the more prosaic business dress.

The return journey to Edmonton is made on the Central Canada and E. D. & B. C. railways, which if not equal to the Grand Trunk Pacific afford for all practical purposes equivalent services. The journey is some 312 miles in length and worthy of more than passing notice. A long side-hill grade leads out of the valley and affords an excellent view of the junction of the Peace and Smoky rivers.

McLennan, 49 miles south, is the function point where the Spirit River and Grande Prairie traffic swings wes-

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terly—the E.D. & B.C. proper. The section between Mc-Lennan and Peace River constitutes the Central Canada railway, apparently a separate railway in name only.

Another interesting section is found centering in High Prairie after which the southern shore of Lesser Slave Lake is skirted. The lake will always be associated with large yields of whitefish. Extensive hay marshes surround it and beyond are timbered lands, now set apart as forest reserves.

The Peace River district is now left behind. The Athabasca river is crossed at a point near old Mirror Landing, at the mouth of Lesser Slave river. The divisional point of Smith is located here.

From Smith to Edmonton the run of 130 miles is more commonplace, serving to instill in the party a belated inclination to terminate their journey and reach their destination in time to enjoy the evening meal at home and spend a social evening in happy re-union with friends.

This trip can be made with a minimum of expense and hardship and it provides a maximum of pleasure and outdoor activity. It leads into the lonely wilderness and to the stirring frontier. A glimpse of the past and a vision of the rapidly encroaching future is gained. Mixed with pleasure is an educational lesson on the greatness of our natural resources, the beauties of our land and the unlimited possibilities of future development. It is an outing that will give more real combined pleasure and profit than foreign ones of more pretention and one that every Canadian interested in the progress of his country should be glad to take.

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